

**BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 6
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 16, 2011**

ATTENDANCE:

J. ARMER	S. BURZIO	J. COHN
N. COX	H. LINK	T. MISKEL
M. MURPHY	L. NAPOLITANO	R. RIGOLLI

EXCUSED:

D. ABRAHAM	W. BLUM	D. GIULIANO
J. LEVIN	R. OBERLENDER	G. REILLY

ABSENT:

J. IGNERI	A. MCKNIGHT	V. MILNE
R. SLOANE	J. THOMPSON	M. VERRET

GUESTS:

M. KELLEY – REP. FOR HON. MARTY MARKOWITZ, BROOKLYN BORO PRESIDENT		
A. THOMPSON – REP. FOR HON. STEPHEN LEVIN, CITY COUNCIL MEMBER		
R. GOODMAN – REP. FOR HON. BRAD LANDER, CITY COUNCIL MEMBER		
E. MCCLURE	D. DECOSTANZO	S. PHILLIPS
J. OLTMAN SMITH	C. KRONNE	M. MANUTO-BROWN
I. SEALEY	J. JOHNSON	M. TAUB

*****MINUTES*****

Presentation and discussion with representatives for the Department of Transportation on the preliminary design investigation for the Prospect Park West bicycle lane raised medians.

Preston Johnson made the presentation on behalf of Department of Transportation in response to the resolution passed by CB6. He began by reviewing the list of the requested changes/recommendations and then reported on their status:

- Rumble strips completed June 2011.
- Drop-off zone adjustments made.
- Seasonal regulations will be implemented for loading zones.
- Narrowed buffer near Union Street will be implemented along with upcoming GAP changes.
- DOT believes it can restore 14 parking spaces.
- DOT declines signalization of the entrance to Litchfield driveway.
- Monitoring of safety will continue through 2013.
- DOT declines signalization of pedestrian crossing at bike path because they feel that it de-prioritizes the pedestrian.
- Island improvements will consist of exposed aggregate concrete, cobblestone lined tree pits, grey tinted concrete curbs unless funding is obtained for granite curbs.

- DOT believes that their length and widths for the islands are correct: they need access along the curb and the length of the island maintains good visibility for pedestrians.

The presentation included plan drawings of each intersection and renderings of the proposed island design. Construction of the islands is expected in Spring 2012.

Q: How long will construction take?

A: Approx. 2 – 3 months.

Q: There are no pedestrian ramps at some intersections – can they be included?

A: DOT would like to include them; need to see where they are required.

Q: Is there enough room for a truck exiting Litchfield to wait for traffic without blocking bike lane?

A: Acknowledge that a large truck would block the bike lane while waiting to pull out, but DOT believes riders will adjust to the circumstances.

Q: Can signage be provided to direct vehicles not to block the bike lane?

A: Yes.

Q: Can the whole island have a permeable surface in the interest of ensuring that trees get enough water?

A: DOT will work with Parks Department to maximize the permeable surface.

Q: How much do you need for granite curbs?

A: About \$200K. Councilmember Landers office is working on securing funds.

Q: Are relocated pedestrian signals included in the island work?

A: Yes.

Q: Concern that the space between the islands may be used by cars for parking – can it be marked to prevent this?

A: Generally there is not enough space between the islands for a car.

Q: Are any more parking spaces available?

A: DOT continues to work on this.

Q: What is the lead-time needed for the granite curbs.

A: Need commitment ASAP so that orders can be placed. The sooner, the better.

A general discussion ensued about further CB6 input on the design and materials and the final date for funding of the granite curbs. DOT noted that if construction was to begin on schedule next Spring, all further comments needed to be submitted ASAP.

Q: Why is there no signal at President Street? It is difficult for bikers to cross PPW to access President.

A: Only streets with traffic approaching PPW are signalized.

Lisa Napolitano introduced a recommendation that approval of the DOT island design conditional upon the inclusion of granite curbs.

VOTE: 3.....YEAS 3.....NAYS 3.....ABSTENTIONS
MOTION FAILS

Jerry Armer introduced a recommendation that DOT investigate and provide pedestrian ramps at the east sidewalk as necessary and make this part of the island construction work.

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Daniel Kummer introduced a recommendation that the pedestrian signals be left on the east sidewalk rather than move them to the islands because it introduced visual clutter, and possibly reduced pedestrian safety.

General discussion of the issue, Ryan Russo of DOT explained that it was their practice to place pedestrian signals on either side of street containing vehicles; that leaving them beyond the bike path might create confusion between pedestrians and bicyclists.

MOTION FAILS

Q: Who maintains the tree pits?

A: Parks Department.

Q: Has DOT considered that park features might be obscured by the plantings in the islands?

A: Will continue to discuss with the Parks Department.

Q: Is a copy of this presentation available?

A: It will be on the website tomorrow.

Review and discussion of Whole Foods Market's traffic study and transportation remediation plans for the project site at 214 3rd Street (area bounded by 3rd Avenue, 3rd Street, 4th Street basin and Gowanus Canal) and environs.

Question and Answer Session about the Whole Foods Traffic Study

Marty Taub of Eng-Wong, Taub and Associates was present, also Jerry Johnson of Wachtel and Masyr, LLP (representing Whole Foods). Tom Miskel reviewed the background of this topic: discussion of the traffic study was referred to the Transportation Committee from the Land Use Committee.

Q: The report mischaracterizes some of the streets: why is 3rd Avenue called a 'commuter' route when it is really a truck route? There is a school across the street but no mention of drop off and pickup activity – why not? How can Whole Foods ensure control over delivery times?

A: Marty Taub: Commuter traffic does exist on 3rd Avenue and this seemed most relevant. All school traffic is included in the counts and it is not necessary to single it out, but it can be mentioned in the final revision.

A: Jerry Johnson: will check with Whole Foods, but they are confident they can control delivery times.

Q: The B103 bus is listed as 'local' but it actually is a 'limited'.

A: The traffic study only distinguishes between local and express. The limited bus is considered local.

Q: Will signaling the entrance to the parking lot meet minimum distance requirements between signals?

A: Yes, it is 200 – 250 feet from the corner.

Q: The study radius seems too small. How can we expand it to make it more meaningful?

A: Will review with DOT.

Q: Why was Union and 3rd Avenue intersection not included?

A: We'll look into that.

Marie Brown of the 3rd Street Block Association described the traffic problems residents of 3rd Street experience and submitted a list of recommendations for consideration. Included was a request for a right turn lane into the parking lot.

Marty Taub: We will review these recommendations and discuss with DOT. Initial studies do not indicate that a dedicated right turn lane is necessary but it will be reviewed.

Chris Hrones of DOT: DOT will review the list. Some of the items may be addressed by new Downtown Brooklyn traffic calming measures.

Comment: Please look at the 3rd Street/2nd Pl congestion problem.

Comment: There is a lot of truck traffic and congestion at 3rd Street and 3rd Ave.

Q: Is there a number for average daily trips?

A: Not a meaningful statistic – the amount of trips at specific hours is most important.

Jerry Armer introduced a recommendation comprising the following:

1. BSA mandate that Whole Foods continue to work with the Community Board and affected community when planning, reviewing and refining the specific traffic mitigation plan that NYC DOT will be implementing.
2. BSA and DOT mandate that the scope of the study be expanded beyond the CEQR minimum ¼-mile radius, given the size of the store and the fact that it is widely viewed as a regional rather than a local business.
3. BSA mandate that one year after the store opens that Whole Foods perform a follow-up traffic study to compare actual conditions with the study's projections to see if additional traffic mitigation directly related to the store's impact on the area are warranted.
4. NYC DOT review the list of recommendations prepared by the 3rd Street Block Association and respond to each item to the Community Board and the community.

General discussion preceded a vote

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

A discussion ensued concerning efforts to reduce automobile usage. Ikea was cited as an example of how the company tried to encourage alternative means of transportation to the store. Members of the committee encouraged Whole Foods to look into methods of promoting alternatives to driving to the store.

Motion to adjourn.

Minutes submitted by Norman Cox.